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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP; NSC FOR E.PHU

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S PARTY SET TO WIN LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

REF: JAKARTA 00656 AND PREVIOUS

11. (U) This message is Sensitive but Unclassified -- Please handle accordingly.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: As quick counts crystallize the day after the April 9 national legislative elections, it appears that President Yudhoyono's Partai Demokrat (PD) will emerge victorious. PD easily tops the list of nine parties which seem set to garner enough votes to enter Parliament (DPR). PD is followed by main contenders Golkar and the Indonesia Party of Democratic Struggle (PDI-P). Four major Islamic-oriented parties trail the three secular nationalist parties. As the counting continues, the situation across the country seems largely calm and peaceful on April 10. Septel reviews the situation in Aceh. END SUMMARY.

LATEST RESULTS GIVE EDGE TO PD

13. (SBU) While official results will take time, preliminary estimates from quick counts give a good picture of the state of play. Nine of Indonesia's thirty-eight parties are poised to cross the parliamentary threshold (2.5% of the national vote) and get seats in the DPR. At just above 20% of support so far, PD is so far strongly leading the pack, followed by Golkar and PDI-P at approximately 14-15% each.

14. (SBU) This represents a huge gain for PD, which roughly tripled its vote share since 2004 (when they won 7.45% of the national vote). If the results hold out, it also represents a bad showing for both Golkar and PDI-P, which were the big winners in 2004 with 21% of the vote and 18.5% of the vote respectively. Results also seem to indicate that the President's PD party could gain the 20% of the DPR seats required to nominate its own presidential candidate. Voters appear to have supported the stability, centrism and relative prosperity that Yudhoyono has brought to Indonesia over the past five years.

15. (SBU) Islamic-oriented parties also seem to be losers in this election. If quick count results hold out, several small parties will disappear from the DPR in 2009. Three significant Islamic-oriented parties declined in vote share. The first, the Suharto-era United Development Party (PPP), the third largest party in the DPR (8.2% of the 2004 vote) has declined to a projected 5% of the vote. The National Mandate Party (PAN) and ex-President Abdurahman Wahid's National Awakening Party (PKB) will also probably decline in vote share. Only the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) held firm at 7%, the same as 2004, but did not make the big gains it had expected. None has gained ground. Again, the above figures are all estimates and unofficial.

16. (SBU) Not everything is upbeat. Golkar Chief Vice President Kalla and PDI-P leader Megawati have signalled some

dissatisfaction with the electoral process. Moreover, Kalla has made statements that implied that Golkar's poor showing could be due to voting irregularities and said Golkar will monitor the counting. PDI-P party officials have also stated that they will vigilantly watch for problems. This type of grousing in the case of a strong PD showing was expected and probably will increase if the vote count confirms the estimates.

OFFICIAL RESULTS WILL TAKE TIME

17. (SBU) Official results will take time as the official counting gets off to a slow but steady start. The KPU plans to begin the national vote count 2 p.m. April 10. KPU has set up an Elections Information Center for vote tabulation, to stay open until April 20. Final official results are expected to be announced May 8.

18. (SBU) At midnight April 9, Poloff and PolFSNs observed counting processes at several polling stations, accompanying officials who took ballot boxes to municipal offices. Officials there reviewed the ballot tallies, recorded vote distribution by party and sealed the ballot boxes for later KPU tallies. Poloff also observed that ballot boxes were easily accessible--many were unsealed (poll workers reassured him that they would be guarded) and others had keys still in their locks. There were also some unconfirmed reports that unused ballots were stored in the same boxes as used ballots.

SITUATION CALM

19. (SBU) Despite some logistical issues re insufficient or

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incorrect ballots and incomplete voter lists, the situation has remained calm. Isolated incidents of vote counting irregularities were also reported by observers. Some pundits noted relatively low turnouts in several areas, particularly for Jakarta residents on their way out of town for the four day holiday weekend. Based on current information, the elections appeared largely free and fair, and a success for Indonesia's maturing democracy. Septel reviews the situation in Aceh, where the election also proceeded largely smoothly.

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